

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN
REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 62nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

held at

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, W.C. 1, on FRIDAY, SATURDAY &
SUNDAY: 8th, 9th and 10th April, 1965

Attendances at Conference:

	<u>Delegates Present</u>	<u>Branches Represented</u>
<u>First Day</u>	35	17
Not represented:	Kingston & Nottingham	
<u>Second Day</u>	30	16
Not represented:	Kingston, Nottingham, Wood Gn. & Hornsey	
<u>Third Day</u>	27	15
Not represented:	Kingston, Nottingham, Wood Gn. & Hornsey	

Comrades George and Edmunds were elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively and it was agreed that Standing Orders Committee act as Tellers.

FRIDAY SESSION

Item for Discussion:

A. Paddington Branch. "The Party's Secretarial and Administrative requirements".

Comrade May, for Paddington, stated that the Branch felt that Head Office administrative and secretarial work, relying as it does on voluntary help, leaves much to be desired. We need someone full time at Head Office to carry out the work. He suggested that an envelope-addressing machine would also be a great help. It was necessary to write out 385 envelopes, often 5 or 6 times a year when London members are sent urgent circulars. Also the distribution of literature is not always satisfactory. If the "Socialist Standard" comes out on a Monday or Tuesday and is in the post the next day, it is sometimes Friday or Saturday before they are delivered to Branches, the postal service being unreliable. Some Branches, bearing this in mind, made arrangements to collect their supplies by hand often only to find they had been despatched. Head Office work should not only be better organised but should cover a wider field and our present resources extended. A full time "all rounder" would go a long way to remove the discrepancies.

Comrade Lawrence, Bloomsbury, thought the matter was one of staffing - it is a mistake to think that an addressograph would solve the problem as we could easily get one through the E.C. In fact, there is one available at Head Office at the moment but it is complicated to use, needing someone with time to handle this equipment. He added that the "S.S." is always out of Head Office on the day it arrives, certainly within 24 hours. Comrade Fahy, Mid-Herts, thought we needed somebody at H.O. to deal with correspondence, answer the telephone, and carry out the usual administrative jobs. Comrade Lake (Treasurer) pointed out that we already had a part-time member at Head Office and also that we were not in a position to pay big wages at the moment. On the whole, the Party's work gets done efficiently enough. Our accounts are 100% perfect and our work generally compares favourably with that of other small organisations. One or two delegates, though not in principle against paying members, thought that voluntary work is often better done.

The General Secretary drew attention to the fact that we were short of members who would take on regular jobs of responsibility and that this extended to E.C. sub-Committees and officers.

RESOLUTION 1

Paddington Branch: "This Conference instructs the E.C. to set up a Committee to investigate the present Branch structure of the Party, with special reference to the London area, and report their recommendations to the Delegate Meeting".

Carried 29 - 3

Comrade May, Paddington, opened up by reading Paddington Branch's circular letter to all Branches which urged the need for a larger minimum Branch membership, and suggested that six is inadequate for current needs. From the point of view of contesting Local Elections, Branches should be arranged, where necessary to conform to the Greater London Council Boroughs. He pointed out that in future Local Elections will assume the importance of a General Election and we could not contest on the basis of our present Branch structure.

Comrade Lake drew attention to the fact that, compared with the past, Party membership tends to be more scattered, the largest Branch at the moment being Central Branch. We should bear in mind that only a very small minority of people are ready for our case and that minority is

1760-8

scattered widely over the country - we cannot expect to have strong Branches in areas with small populations. The development of the socialist movement has changed its character and we have to cater for a general world movement and not just in London. The Groups Secretary stated that if Branches were larger they could certainly carry out their normal business more efficiently and more help would be available to assist in provincial areas such as Oxford, Brighton and Southend. Other points made were that many Branches at the moment did not function and that there is a lack of liaison between Branches.

RESOLUTION 2 Swansea Branch: "That the name of the Party be changed to "World Socialist Party".

AMENDMENT 2a Islington Branch: "Delete the word "World"".

Amendment Lost 5 - 33
Resolution Lost 8 - 30

Comrade R. Mellor, Swansea, stated that the present name - "Socialist Party of Great Britain" - causes considerable confusion amongst members of the working class - it is too parochial. Cde. Mattingley, Mid-Herts, considered the change should be to the "World Socialist Party of Great Britain", but an Islington delegate pointed out that the word "socialism" itself means world-wide. It was suggested by Cde. Lawrence, Bloomsbury, that the Party's name should be registered. Others thought that changing the name of the Party will not get rid of the confusion which is, to some extent, inevitable due to the misrepresentation by other Parties of the words 'Socialist' and 'Socialism'.

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

B. Bloomsbury Branch: "Dues and the Party's Income".

Comrade Devereux, Bloomsbury, invited discussion as to the relationship between dues and the Party's income generally. Many members thought of increasing dues as a means of raising the Party's income and more adequately cover the cost of the Party's activities. Before committing ourselves to an increase in dues we should consider the purpose for which dues should be used. Should they merely represent a link for the individual with the Party? Cde. Cook, Birmingham, stated that the major purpose of dues is to form the basis of the financial structure of the Party. Other points made were that there should be better control and allocation of Party finances, with a system of priorities on the Party's income.

RESOLUTION 11

Glasgow Branch: "That this Conference instructs the E.C. to take a poll of the Party on the question: "Shall any money owned by the Socialist Party of Great Britain be used for the purpose of producing rent, interest and profit?"

Lost 16 - 28

Comrade Donnelly, Glasgow, stated that they regretted that the Party had recently changed its past attitude that we should have nothing to do with the exploitation mechanism of capitalism. There is an important principle at stake here and the best way to solve the question was to have a Party poll. We should turn away from any suggestion that we should collect interest by cash deposits etc, and Rule 15 should be so amended. He was supported by Swansea. Some delegates pointed out that merely to have a balance in a current account meant that the money was used for investment by the Bank, this being a basic activity. Comrade Baldwin, E.C. member, asked how we can possibly condemn exploitation on the platform and yet have money in a deposit account. He regretted the attitude he felt was creeping into the Party that money alone is of paramount importance.

Com
had arriv
the warn
which prob
the mov
money

Comrade Feinzig, the fraternal delegate from the W.S.P. of U.S. who had arrived only that morning from Boston, made a short speech bringing the warm greetings from the Comrades in America. He added that some of the problems being discussed brought home to him the similar discussions which took place in the U.S.A. Often there could be no real answer until the movement is large and strong when more activity would occur and more money would be available.

At this point the Chairman read out greetings from the League of Democratic Socialists in Vienna, the Socialist Party of New Zealand, the Socialist Party of Canada and the World Socialist Party of Ireland. It was agreed to send greetings to all Parties abroad and to the League in Vienna and the Group in Jamaica.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The discussion here was concerned mainly with the loss on the "S.S". In reply to a request from two comrades for a breakdown between literature and the "S.S", Comrade R. Guy, auditor, pointed out that as the books of the Party were now kept there is only one column for literature as a whole and it was impossible, without changing our system of book-keeping, to separate income from the "S.S" from income from literature generally. The General Secretary was able to give some information which had been obtained from the invoices of the Party at Head Office as to the income from the "S.S" only for 1953, 1964 and the half year to June 1965, together with the expenditure (cost of printing) for the period, as shown below:-

<u>Income</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>Half-year 1965</u>
(Invoices)	£ 570.19.11	£764. 6. 7	£371. 3. 2
Subscribers	160. 0. 0	160. 0. 0	80. 0. 0
	<u>£ 730.19.11</u>	<u>£924. 6. 7</u>	<u>£451. 3. 2</u>
<u>Expenditure:</u>	<u>£1,623</u>	<u>£1,634</u>	<u>£895.18. 6</u>
<u>Cost of Advertising:</u>	<u>£18</u>	<u>£45</u>	<u>£35</u>

The Chairman pointed out that when we have paid for the "S.S" and current bills our income and expenditure just about balance.

AMENDMENTS TO RULE

There was very little discussion on these instructed amendments except with regard to Rule 15 (Mid-Herts) and Rule 28 (Swansea - amended by Paddington). The voting is shown below:-

- Rule 2. Paddington. "On line 1, Rule 2, delete 6d. and insert 1/-"
Lost 16 - 24
- Rule 8. Camberwell. "Delete the words (except in the case of new Branches as qualified under Rule 22) as bracketed".
Lost 8 - 22
- Rule 9. Paddington. "On line 2, Rule 9, delete 4d. and insert 8d."
Falls
- Rule 12. Camberwell. "Delete the words 'A member of less than six months standing shall not be eligible for candidature'.
Lost 12 - 30
- Rule 16. Paddington. "Delete this Rule".
Lost 8 - 33
- Rule 20. Camberwell. "Delete all after 'Delegates' in line 6 and up to and including 'meeting' in line 11".
Lost 13 - 22

Rule 27. Camberwell. "That Rule 27 be amended to read:- 'Candidates for Political Office shall have passed an examination set by the Executive Committee'".

Lost 12 - 30

Rule 15. Mid-Herts. "The third sentence be removed and replaced by "They shall see that all Party funds not necessary for immediate use are placed in bank current or deposit accounts or invested to finance future activity, arranging all matters relating thereto with the Secretary, Treasurer and Trustees"."

Lost 16 - 24

Comrade Fahy stressed the need for investing funds in order to provide some kind of a trust to enable the Party to pay members for the work urgently required to be done, giving them the same security they would get from a capitalist employer. We should exercise discretion as to where we invest it and use it wisely. Some delegates were very opposed to this stating that the Party should get its income from its activity, the less we have to do with capitalist finances the better, and that a very large sum would need to be invested to give security for the employment of even one person.

Rule 28. Swansea. "Delete all after 'paper' on line 7".

Amendment -- Paddington: "Alter Swansea Amendment to read, delete all after 'Constituency' in line 4".

Amendment Lost 13 - 29.

Resolution Lost 8 - 32.

Comrade Lawrence, Bloomsbury, stated that they accepted that Rule 28 as it stands is harmful to the Party and needs amendment because we never know whether we have the requisite 10 members. We need a committee to draft an amendment which would safeguard the Party's position and at the same time wipe out this unreasonable restriction imposed on us over the last decade. Bloomsbury do not think the amendment suggested by Paddington is the best way to do this. Cde. May stated that at Hampstead we had a candidate nominated, 42,000 "Addresses" had been printed and 30,000 envelopes addressed, when one of our 'resident' members went to Italy and only arrived back in time before the close of the signing of the Nomination Papers. He might well have had to stay in Italy, in which event we could not have contested Hampstead. Cde. Baldwin said that the evidence against retaining Rule 28 was accumulating - should we have to follow the dictates of a Party ruling rather than what is the best Constituency to contest?

Stress was laid in discussion by more than one delegate who favoured retaining Rule 28 on the importance of propaganda activity in the area selected both before and after an election. This was the best way to ensure that we would have the required 10 members, i.e. by intensive work producing new members. Comrade Lake, Treasurer, stated he was opposed to contesting elections at this stage. The people we were anxious to get hold of were those with a political bias, i.e. who already had political interests. However, at Election times such people tend to close their ranks and are less ready to consider our case calmly. Socialism requires the work of socialists and we should not have to go to non-socialists to sign Nomination Papers. If we do not have sufficient socialists in a Constituency we will only bring ridicule on the Party. It is a mistake to hammer away at one particular spot - we will never get large support in any particular place until there is a general movement towards the socialist case. We should spend money at election time stating why we were not putting forward a candidate. This would be better propaganda. One delegate said that we do not contest elections for the sake of publicity; the propaganda work is more important. If we had not contested Hampstead our election activities in London would have been zero. Nobody would have listened to us. Members worked in Hampstead and enjoyed it, though often in their own area they did nothing. Such work stimulated interest amongst our members.

Comrade
Organiser
Committee
this Co
SATU
EL
W

Comrade Fahy drew attention to the fact that Comrade May, Central Organiser, had to spend much of his time assisting the Propaganda Committee and it was pointed out that despite attempts to get someone on this Committee we have been unsuccessful so far. Experienced help in this connection is very urgently needed at Head Office.

SATURDAY

Electoral Activities. The Chairman read the Election Reports of Woodside, Glasgow, and Hampstead, not yet before the E.C. and a summary of each will be included in E.C. Minutes of 12th April.

In reply to a question, Glasgow Branch said they had been unable to avail themselves of the free postal delivery as they had not enough members to write the envelopes. Cde. May said, in reply to a question as to what was now being done to keep contact alive in Hampstead, that plans were afoot to this end. The Hampstead "Candidate's Address" was generally considered one of the best we have had, particularly in view of the short time available to prepare it. The only criticism put forward was that it was too long. Was it possible to write drafts well in advance and bring them up-to-date from time to time. Then at election times we could quickly print them. It was deplored that we are still unable to obtain time on Television. One or two comrades, able to speak French, were interviewed going to the polls by Belgian Television reporters for the equivalent of 'Panorama', and they were able to discuss the Party's views in French. Cde. Mellor, Swansea, said that Swansea Branch were invited by B.B.C. Television to express their opinion on the election results but unfortunately, because of a disagreement between the B.B.C. and the local Corporation, it was decided not to send the Unit. The invitation from the B.B.C. to Swansea Branch was the direct result of members continually writing to the B.B.C. on the subject of time for the Party on Television. Other Branches might do well to copy.

Cde. R. Cook, Birmingham, stated that four members from Birmingham went to Hampstead and were impressed by the work being done but that the number of members taking active part was very short of the London membership as a whole. He thought that the comrades organising an election campaign should be a little more autocratic in delegating the jobs to be done, and members should be prepared to put themselves at the disposal of those organising.

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

D. Mid-Herts. Branch. "Youth and Socialist Activity".

Comrade Hidson, Mid-Herts, stressed the need to contact Youth Organisations, Young Socialists and C.N.D.'ers. He said that the average Party member at present is "middle-aged" and tend to look down on young people as 'kids'. We should remember that the future of the Party rests on young people and more effort should be made to get in touch with them. Cde. K. Graham, Birmingham, endorsed these views, stating that there are important differences in the young people of today, i.e. they had no experience of war or of slump conditions. The Party is afraid to go into these differences although there are many young people ripe for socialism. He was not suggesting that the Party should ignore the rest of the working class but there was a lack of flexibility in our official propaganda. We should not restrict our propaganda to those interested in politics; there is other good material among young people. Cde. R. Mellor, Swansea, pointed out that Socialism was age-less - it cannot be modified to suit young people. He considered that they were just as difficult to convince as older people. Other points made were that it was impossible to state the socialist case so that it was specifically acceptable to young people but that we could send speakers along to Youth Organisations of all kinds - in fact, we were already doing this to some extent.

RESOLUTION 3.

Paddington Branch: "This Conference instructs the E.C. to make special rates for the "Socialist Standard" to Students Groups, Schools etc".

Lost 11 - 20.

Paddington Branch stated that people sometimes find it difficult to pay 8/- for a year's subscription and it would help Students Groups attached to Universities if a year's subscription could be granted them for 4/- only. A notice to this effect should be placed in the "S.S". Bloomsbury Branch thought we should not have a definite ruling on this. It should be left to the discretion of the E.C. to consider requests for cheaper rates on their merits. (In fact, the Party was very accommodating to individuals and groups unable to afford the subscription rates).

RESOLUTION 4.

Paddington Branch: "That this Conference instructs that the price of the "Socialist Standard" be increased to 9d".

Lost 15 - 24

Comrade Cook, Birmingham, said that the loss on the "S.S" is of great concern to the Party, but if we increase the price we may lose readers. If we reduce our order no printer will think it worth while to handle it. He urged the Party to consider printing all its own material. Modern machines made this possible at a cost within our range. Comrade Baldwin, E.C. member, said that we could not afford the machinery nor was the labour force available. Other points made were that it was not easy to sell the "S.S" even at 6d. because of the competition with more attractive journals; the circulation of the "S.S" had decreased by one-third since the price was increased from 3d. to 6d. in 1950; that all our activities are financially unprofitable and that the rise or fall in "S.S" circulation was not really related to price at all.

RESOLUTION 6.

Camberwell Branch: "That the title of the "Socialist Standard be changed to "Socialist Standard" official journal of the Socialist Party of Great Britain (i.e. this will mean the exclusion of the words - 'and the World Socialist Party of Ireland')".

Lost 11 - 29

RESOLUTION 6.

Camberwell Branch: "That this Conference calls for the overhauling of the Party Directory on the inside front page of the "Socialist Standard".

Carried 32 - 5

Comrade Crump, Camberwell, said that the Party Directory is not comprehensive enough and does not cover a wide enough field nor reflect the true activity of the Party - also that some of the Branch information was incorrect. In Yorkshire, for example, there is not a single name in the Directory which people could contact. There should be names of Central Branch members shown as contacts. Cde. Grant, Paddington, said this should tie up with Resolution 1. to look at the Greater London area. It is essential and possible that all the 32 London boroughs should have a name shown in the Directory as a contact.

RESOLUTION 7.

Paddington Branch: "This Conference instructs the E.C. to raise the price of the "Western Socialist" in this country from 6d. to 1/-".

Lost 16 - 26

It was stated that our American comrades were perplexed to find that we were only selling the "W.S" at 6d, which is a lower price than it costs to produce; workers here who were interested in American news would probably be prepared to pay 1/-. Bookshops would also find it more worth while to stock, which they do not for a journal retailing at 6d.

RESOLUTION 8. Paddington Branch: "This Conference is most perturbed that no new pamphlets have appeared since last Conference and instructs the E.C. to take steps to ensure that at least the pamphlets on Russia, War and Race appear with all possible speed".

Carried 20 - 4

SUNDAY

RESOLUTION 9. Mid-Herts. Branch: "That this Conference is in favour of short, moderately-priced pamphlets and instructs the E.C. to investigate and give effect to this proposal as a matter of priority".

Carried 24 - nil

FLOOR RESOLUTION: Camberwell Branch. "That this Conference calls on the E.C. to urgently look into the question of producing a short, moderately priced pamphlet on the Labour Government".

Carried 16 - 3

Comrade Crump, Camberwell, pointed out that our present pamphlet on the Labour Government is out of date and needs replacing. We might, perhaps, consider reprinting some of the articles on the Labour Government already in the "Socialist Standard". Mid-Herts. Branch thought we should have short, moderately-priced pamphlets on topics which are in the public eye. They suggested an analysis of prices and incomes, for example, which could take the mystery out of this subject, or unemployment, i.e. topics that could be dealt with in a few pages, giving an accurate analysis of contemporary situations. Bloomsbury Branch thought it would be better if the "S.S." was sold at a more realistic price and that, in addition, we should have a series of leaflets on various subjects. This would be less cumbersome than pamphlets. Other points made were that the "S.S." is the medium for special topics and that these short pamphlets might be produced at the expense of the larger ones already in course of preparation. Mid-Herts. Branch stated that they are starting a writers' class and hope shortly to augment the supply of suitable topics and some of the material needed.

Floor Resolution Carried 16 - 3

RESOLUTION 12. Dartford Branch: "That this Conference endorses the decisions of the 62nd Executive Committee taken at its 46th Meeting on November 16th, 1965, relating to the 'British Humanist Association' and the 'Rationalist Press Association Ltd'. Acting on these decisions, this Conference therefore affirms that membership of either of these Organisations and of the 'National Secular Society' is incompatible with membership of the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

Carried 39 - 1

Dartford Branch wished to have a Conference Resolution on this matter to emphasise our opposition to these Organisations. By endorsing this Resolution we were only keeping faith with our hostility clause.

RESOLUTION 10. Glasgow Branch: "That this Conference instructs the E.C. to appoint a full-time propaganda organiser, and that this Propaganda Organiser be an experienced speaker whose job it is to hold meetings indoor and outdoor, contact members and sympathisers in those areas where there is the possibility of forming a Branch or assisting a Branch which has a lack of speakers, speaking at outdoor meetings throughout the country and wherever possible at lunch-hour meetings in large Cities (a form of activity that can be carried out throughout the year) speak at indoor meetings and organising with local comrades in the area, booking halls, preparing and posting bills, visit Newsagents attempting to get the "S.S." on display and wherever possible give Branch lectures and educational classes".

10a. Amendments - Mid-Herts. and Islington Branches:

"All after Organiser in line 2 be deleted" Mid-Herts.
 "Delete all after Organiser in second line" Paddington.

Amendment Lost 11 - 26. Resolution Lost 8 - 27.

Comrade Mattingley, Mid-Herts, stated that "mucking along" as in the past was not good enough and is no longer adequate for our needs. He thought the Glasgow resolution was too detailed and would require someone of considerable patience and endurance. We should be able to guarantee a certain remuneration and the organiser should be backed by sensible finance. Branches in opposition pointed out that at present we simply did not have the money and in any event, the tasks demanded of an organiser in the resolution were impossible to fulfil. Glasgow Branch said they did not agree that the duties set out in their resolution were beyond the scope of a member.

OVERSEAS CONTACTS. Comrade Goodman, Overseas Contacts Secretary, explained that she was in some difficulty in that she did not see how she could get what she considered important information over to the Party because her reports were abridged by the E.C. She instanced the abridging by the E.C. of her letter of 3rd February giving the history and progress of the Vienna Group. She also felt that a leaflet in French rather than one in Italian (just completed) would have been more useful from her point of view and that the E.C. should have consulted her before giving preference to the Italian one.

The Chairman said that the E.C. devolves its work on to sub-Committees and in the last analysis it has to be the E.C. which decides what goes in its own Report. It was unfortunate that the matter was brought to Conference. Had it been raised with the E.C. when the Report was published most probably any misunderstanding would have been cleared up.

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION.

F. Paddington Branch: "Does the Party take full advantage of propaganda opportunities and collaborate sufficiently with emerging socialist groups?"

Some delegates thought the E.C. were too much on the defensive and gave such groups insufficient encouragement. Particular reference was made to the E.C.'s handling of the invitation to send a delegate to the W.R.I. Conference in Rome.

The Chairman pointed out that the E.C. took the line that the Party has always taken, that it cannot send delegates to Organisations to which we were opposed without being associated with any resolutions etc. passed - we should be immediately identified with them. Instead, the E.C. drew up a Statement of the Party's case (published as an Open Letter in the April "S.3"), had it translated and printed in Italian and distributed by an ex-Party member in Rome at the Conference. The E.C. did not wish the Party to join hands with an organisation seeking to set up a Political Party whose main concern was war but which was prepared to support a social system that gave rise to wars. Comrade Baldwin, E.C. member, endorsed this saying that the express purpose of this Rome Conference was, as stated in their letter to the Party, to bridge the gap between pacifist organisations and to form a pacifist political party. Cde. Lawrence, Bloomsbury, thought it would be a disaster for the Party to be listed with such organisations. We were the only Party at the moment who were putting the socialist case against war. Regarding the Vienna Group, he said he congratulated the E.C. in acting as they did with very confused information, despite criticism by some members. That the E.C. had been too cautious in its attitude to the League. Up to the present time there were only 40 sympathisers who had expressed their adherence to the D. of P. In Vienna there are the first signs of an organised political movement on the Continent, one which offers hope for the future but he thought the E.C. had acted very sensibly in showing

caution
 year, a
 social
 show
 ITC
 H

caution. They had offered to help the Austrian comrades but for the first year, at any rate, the Group is anxious to establish itself as a socialist movement on its own feet. We should not embarrass them by showing an enthusiasm which they cannot live up to.

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION.

H. & I. Swansea Branch: "The future of the "Socialist Standard".
"The possibility of a weekly journal".

J. West London Branch. "Should the price of the "S.S." to Branches be increased from 5/- to 6/- a dozen?"

Comrade Ambridge, Swansea, wished to urge a complete breakaway in literature publication and suggested that we should consider publishing a weekly journal. The monthly "S.S." is a purely propaganda journal, and as such the trade are not interested. A weekly journal could be issued in time to deal with political topics as they occur. He also stressed the necessity for better advertising to increase the circulation of the "S.S.". Comrade Feinzig stated that every American library had been approached to take the "Western Socialist". The S.F.G.B. might consider doing the same in Great Britain. Comrade Lawrence, Bloomsbury, stated that although we charged a yearly subscription of 8/6d. for the "S.S." it actually cost us 9/-. He suggested that the subscription rate should be increased and also that we should reconsider our order for the "Western Socialist". Comrade Corrie, Islington, supported the idea of a weekly journal and reiterated that the over-riding factor in all these matters was finance.

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION.

G. Swansea Branch: "The necessity for the Party to present its propaganda in relation to any activity cultural or political that may arise in any part of the country".

Comrade Mellor, Swansea, suggested that there should be a writers' test on the lines of the present speakers' test so that members would already be trained and able to quickly write a leaflet on a particular event such as an Eistedfod without having to send it for approval to the E.C. It was pointed out that the E.C. were able to speedily deal with such drafts and Comrade McClatchie, E.C. member, reminded the Conference that what a speaker says may be forgotten but the written word remains on record; it was essential that if anything is issued bearing the Party's name it should first be seen by the E.C.

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

E. Paddington Branch: "The urgent need, scope and organisation of Party classes".

Paddington Branch stated they were disturbed at the lack of organised classes due to a lack of interest among Party members; perhaps the form in which classes had been presented had not fitted the Party's requirements. Classes held at some central point was bound to be inconvenient for some. Glasgow's programme of classes seemed to have filled a need and been very successful and would seem to indicate the lines on which educational programmes might be modelled for the future. Comrade Buick, E.C. member, thought that the scope of classes should be broadened to take in such subjects as the theory of biology, races and 'human nature', and so on.

OVERSEAS CONTACTS SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Comrade Goodman, Overseas Contacts Secretary, deplored the fact that part of her report had been cut out by the E.C. and again stressed her disappointment that the E.C. had given priority to the Italian leaflet rather than to the French one. She felt she should have been

consulted. She had also written to the E.C. giving the history and progress of the Vienna Group and would have liked this letter to have been reproduced in full - attached to an E.C. Report.

The Chairman explained that the E.C. must be permitted to put in its Report what it thinks is right. They had no information at the time that there were any contacts in France sympathetic and willing to distribute our literature and had never received a request from the Canadian Party for a leaflet in French. The E.C. also had doubt as to whether a French leaflet from here would be of much use to the S.P. of Canada - it might be better for them to write it themselves, addressed to Canadian French-speaking workers. Regarding the Italian leaflet, as we had an active member, Comrade Starz (who translated it), living in Italy, it seemed a good opportunity to go ahead with it.

FLDOR RESOLUTION

Mid-Herts. Branch: "This Conference is of the opinion that all sub-Committees and officers of the E.C. should submit a report of their activities on behalf of the Party for inclusion in the E.C. Report to Conference, and censures the E.C. for not reporting on the activities of the Estates Management Committee; and further requests that an interim report be prepared immediately by that Committee for circulation to Branches".

Mid-Herts. Branch tabled this resolution to show their concern with what they considered the lack of information given to members in connection with the late Comrade Boucher's Estate and the fact that a full report to date had not been made by the Management Committee. Cde. Howard, of the Management Committee, pointed out some of the difficulties which had delayed the settlement of this Estate. She emphasised that the Committee had been as active as possible to speed this matter up but that we were entirely in the Trustees' hand (the Westminster Bank). The Committee had obtained the E.C.'s sanction to approach the Bank with a view to managing the Estate ourselves and at the moment the Committee is trying to do this. The Estate finances are so complicated that the Committee cannot give a full account of income and expenditure at the moment. In reply to a request from Mid-Herts. Branch, the Committee have drawn up an interim report for the E.C. It gives the only information available for Conference. All relevant information had been published in E.C. Minutes. Comrade Lawrence, Bloomsbury, stated that the bulk of the money is in a house that is for sale. Normally we would ask the Bank to put it up for auction but a member of the Party has paid some of the deposit on it but has been unable to get a full mortgage so far. The main income is from the house which we are trying desperately to sell; the rest of the estate is very small. He added that he thought the resolution was an unfortunate one and unnecessarily censorious.

Resolution Lost 6 - 13

It was agreed to adopt the Report of the Executive Committee to the 1966 Conference on the motion of Comrades Lawrence and Mellor.

The Chairman, on behalf of Conference, cordially thanked the Social Committee and its helpers for laying on the excellent refreshments for lunch and on the night of the Social.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
<u>Collections:</u>			
Fri. Sat. Sun.	£43. 4. 0	Hire, Conway Hall	£57. 15. 6
Canteen	£11. 0. 0	Hire of Band	£19. 0. 0
Social Tickets	£ 9. 15. 6	Raffle Prizes	£ 4. 5. 8
Raffle "	£ 6. 17. 11		
Donation	£ 1. 0. 0		£81. 1. 2
Rally Collection	£ 1. 7. 0		
	<u>£73. 4. 5</u>		